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Broadcasters Letter

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United States Department of Agriculture • Office of Communications • Washington, DC 20250-1300

Letter No. 2727

August 18, 1995

NEW UNDER SECRETARY -- Jill L. Long, former U.S. Congress representative from Indiana, was sworn in August 14 as the Under Secretary of Agriculture for Rural Economic and Community Development. Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman said he has known Long for nearly a decade from their work together in the U.S. House of Representatives and has witnessed her distinguished service on the House Agriculture Committee. Under Secretary Long will oversee the management of the Department's Rural Business and Cooperative Development Service, the Rural Housing and Community Development Service and the Rural Utilities Service. Glickman said, "Jill Long's experience in Congress, her strong leadership, and her devotion to rural America will be tremendous assets to USDA as we forge stronger partnerships that will create more economic opportunity in rural America." **Contact: Jim Brownlee (202) 720- 2091.**

AUGUST CROP PRODUCTION REPORT -- USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) announced its latest crop production forecasts August 11. **Corn** production is projected to be 8.12 billion bushels, down 20 percent from the record high production of 1994. Based on August 1 conditions, corn yields are expected to average 125.6 bushels per acre, down 13 bushels from last year. Acreage for harvest, at 64.7 million acres, is 11 percent below the 1994 final harvested acreage.

Cotton production is forecast at a record high of 21.8 million bales, up 11 percent from last year. Producers planted the largest cotton acreage since 1956 -- 16.7 million acres -- up 21 percent from 1994. Harvested acreage of cotton is estimated at 15.8 million acres, the highest level since 1955. Cotton crop potential in the Western states was diminished by winds, cool temperatures and rainfall early in the season.

Soybean production forecast for the 1995 crop is 2.25 billion bushels, down 12 percent from the record high of 1994, but up 20 percent from 1993. Soybean yield is expected to be 36.4 bushels per acre, down 5.5 bushels from the record high of 1994, but up 3.8 bushels from 1993. Soybean acreage to be harvested is 61.7 million, up 587,000 acres from 1994. The planting date in the major producing states lagged behind 1994 and the average. By end of the first week of August, the percent of soybeans blooming or setting pods was behind last year and the five-year average. Soybeans were rated in fair to good condition across the major producing states.

Wheat production is forecast at 2.23 billion bushels, up 2 percent from July 1, but 4 percent less than in 1994. Yields are expected to average 36.6 bushels per acre, up 0.7 bushels from a month ago. **Winter wheat** production is forecast at 1.55 billion bushels, 7 percent less than in 1994. Harvested yields were better than expected for major Soft Red Winter states. Farmers are reporting high yields in Colorado and the Nebraska Panhandle, and prospects for better than expected yields exist in Montana and the Pacific Northwest. **Spring wheat** production is forecast at 561 million bushels, slightly lower than last year. **Contact: Maria Bynum (202) 720-5192.**

CHINA MOVES UP IN GRAIN IMPORTS -- China's record grain imports in 1994/95 propelled them to the number two grain importer position with their total grain imports surpassed only by those of Japan. China's export presence in world grain and rice markets will again be sharply limited during 1995/96 as expanding grain and rice utilization continue to outpace production gains. Projected total imports of wheat, corn, barley, rye and rice in 1995/96 will be a near record. China sharply reduced corn and rice exports in 1994/95. Concurrently, wheat and rice imports were expanded and significant corn imports were made for the first time since 1989/90. This sharply altered trade position resulted in a record net grain trade deficit, according to an August report from USDA's World Agricultural Outlook Board. **Contact: Ray Bridge (202) 720-5447.**

AMERICORPS/USDA RECRUITMENT -- Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman announced (August 14) that the U. S. Department of Agriculture is beginning recruitment nationwide for AmeriCorps members for its 1995-96 national service program. Glickman said, "Our inaugural year was overwhelmingly successful in achieving concrete results in boosting rural development, combating hunger, and improving the environment." USDA ran three types of AmeriCorps teams over the past year in 38 states: an Anti-Hunger Team, a Public Lands and Environment Team and a Rural Development Team. Secretary Glickman emphasized that "many of the AmeriCorps projects are sponsored by community-based organizations. All projects are designed to get things done, while boosting community, opportunity, and responsibility." For information about applying to the AmeriCorps/USDA program, call 1-800-883-4183. Applicants must be 17 years or older. **Contact: Joel Berg (202) 720-6350.**

HACCP PROPOSAL MEETINGS -- A public planning session will be held August 23 by the U. S. Department of Agriculture to set the agenda and format for a series of issue-focused public meetings in September on its proposal to improve the safety of meat and poultry. USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service published the proposed rule, "Pathogen Reduction; Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) Systems" in the Federal Register last February and the public comment period ended July 5. Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman said, "The upcoming public meetings will provide further opportunity for dialogue on the key concerns that were raised during the comment period on the proposed rule." The August 23 planning meeting will be held from 9:00-4:00 in USDA's South Building Cafeteria at 14th & Independence, S.W. in Washington, D.C. The September meetings will be open to the public, and all comments will be a part of the public record. These meetings will give all concerned a unique and valuable forum to discuss key issues in the pathogen reduction/HACCP proposal. **Contact: Johna Pierce (202) 720-4623.**

CATTLE AND SHEEP OUTLOOK -- USDA's Economic Research Service says the U. S. economy has slowed markedly from 1994's GDP growth of 4.1 percent; however, there are few signs of a pending recession and continued low inflation is welcome news to the meat complex, which faces record red meat and poultry supplies in 1995 and again in 1996. Wet, cool weather earlier in the 1995 growing season likely increased the number of abandoned acres and reduced grain yields, but also provided cattlemen with very favorable grazing conditions this summer and large supplies of harvested forage. Total hay production in 1995 is forecast at 157 million tons, 5 percent above last year and the largest since at least 1966. Pasture and range conditions remained very favorable in most areas in early August, with 30 percent of grazing acreage rated fair, 48 percent good and 10 percent excellent. **Contact: Maria Bynum (202) 720-5192.**

FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA # 1994 -- Bad weather and lots of other disease problems are causing lower production forecasts this year. Gary Crawford reports on the crop forecast and supermarket connection in this edition. (Weekly cassette -- five minute documentary).

CONSUMER TIME # 1473 -- Do poor crops mean high food prices? Large beef supplies mean lower prices. Feeding programs can save taxpayers' dollars. Protecting greenery during drought. Water 2000 Project. (Weekly cassette -- consumer features).

AGRITAPE FEATURES # 1986 -- Free trade update. Crop yield forecast better than expected. A long-term solution to fire ants? Bee mites are becoming mighty resistant. Cattle industry continues to expand. (Weekly cassette -- news features).

UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE -- Tuesday, August 22, agricultural outlook; U.S. agricultural trade update; weekly weather and crop report. Wednesday, August 23, livestock, dairy and poultry outlook; fruit and tree nuts outlook. Friday, August 25, livestock slaughter. Thursday, August 31, tobacco world markets and trade. **These are USDA reports we know about in advance. Our newslines carries many stories every day which are not listed in this lineup.**

USDA RADIO NEWSLINES (202) 488-8358 or 8359.

COMREX ENCODED (202) 720-2545

Material changed at 5:00 p.m., ET, each working day and 10:30 a.m. on crop report days.

FROM OUR TELEVISION SERVICE

FEATURES -- Patrick O'Leary reports on the USDA August Crop Report and on Jill L. Long, new Under Secretary of Agriculture for Rural Economic and Community Development (RECD).

ACTUALITIES -- Gerald Bange, USDA Outlook Chairman, comments on the August crop report. Jill L. Long, USDA Under Secretary for RECD, talks about her new mission and goals.

ATTENTION BROADCASTERS: There are some satellite changes in next week's television newsfeed. Please make a note of them.

Thursday, August 24, 3:45 to 4:00 p.m. EDT. Galaxy 6 (C-Band), Transponder 1, Channel 1, Downlink Frequency 3720 MHz, Audio 6.2 and 6.8. **Monday, August 28, from 11:00 to 11:15 a.m. EDT. Telstar 401 (C-Band), Channel 18, downlink frequency 4060 MHz, Audio 6.2 and 6.8.**

Comments and suggestions are welcome regarding USDA broadcast services.

Call Larry A. Quinn, (202) 720-6072; write 1618-S, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250-1300.

OFF MIKE

CHANGES IN RUSSIA...noticed by **Orion Samuelson** (WGN, Chicago, IL) during a recent trip with farmers reviewing potential markets for feed grains, included supermarkets that were clean, well-lighted and well-stocked with meat, bread and a variety of packaged foods -- no empty shelves. Lots of shoppers were buying, and there were no lines of people waiting for food. This is a sharp contrast with what Orion saw there six years ago before the fall of Communism. **Max Armstrong** (WGN, Chicago, IL) said this week that he and Orion were in the middle of 14 remote broadcasts from three state fairs in Wisconsin, Illinois and Indiana.

LONGTIME TV PROGRAM...hosted by **Gene Regan** (WTVY, Dothan, AL) has been on-the-air since April 1958, and it's still going! It's a contender for the longest-running, continuous home, garden and agriculture program carried by a single TV station. Gene says the daily live TV show airs from 12:00 - 12:18 p.m. Also, he hosts a half-hour, weekly Saturday TV program besides his radio programs. Peanut and cotton crops in Alabama benefitted from recent 2-inch rains prompted by Hurricane Erin.

RICE HARVEST...is underway in southern Louisiana with good prospects. **Don Molino** (Louisiana Agri-News Network, Baton Rouge, LA) says cotton is looking good also with little pressure from boll weevils. He estimates that Louisiana now has 400 emu farmers with initial interest in raising breeding stock turning more toward meat production.

TREMENDOUS...is how **Bruce Gaarder** (KNEB, Scottsbluff, NE) described the winter wheat crop in his area. Dryland fields were yielding as high as 70 bushels per acre with irrigated ones up to 100. Yields were running 10-15 bushels per acre higher than normal, and quality was excellent, but the bumper crop has created local storage problems. Corn, sugarbeets and edible bean crops got a late start so farmers hope to escape an early frost. Crop conditions were boosted by 12 inches of rainfall by June 30. Their annual rainfall usually totals only 12-15 inches.

Larry A. Quinn
LARRY A. QUINN, Director

Video, Teleconference and Radio Center



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